

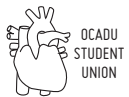


I Am Not Tragically Colored (after Zora Neale Hurston) detail, by Erika DeFreitas, 2013-2014, Photo Credit: Daniel Ehrenworth

EXHIBITION PARTNERS



VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO DR. KENNETH MONTAGUE FOR HIS GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE ARTISTS' FEES



RECEPTION PARTNERS



SPECIAL THANKS TO ALI KAZIMI AND JUDY MACMILLAN



1313 Queen Street West Toronto
Gallery Hours: Wed-Sun, 1PM-6PM

facevaluebyheidimckenzie.wordpress.com

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FEB 19–MAR 2 | Gallery 1313

Opening Reception: Thursday, Feb 20, 2014 | 7-9PM

BY RSVP ONLY TO FACEVALUEOPENING@GMAIL.COM

ARTISTS

Jordan Clarke, Toronto, Canada
Erika DeFreitas, Toronto, Canada
Olivia McGilchrist, Kingston, Jamaica

Curator, Heidi McKenzie

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The exhibition Face Value explores the complexities of mixed-race identity described by theorist Diana Taylor as “the double-coded neither/nor subjectivity.”¹ The three artists featured in the exhibition engage in self-portraiture to narrate their experiences of being mixed race women of Caribbean / European descent. In the artists’ work the mask is the focal point of self-reflexive inquiry, one that embodies, interrogates, and performs mixed-race in order to destabilize racialized stereotypes. The artists’ use of masks – both literally and metaphorically – challenges society’s ideas of who these women might be, at face value.



Jordan Clarke’s self-portraits span a three-year process in which she produces paintings that represent herself in relation to her understanding of how others perceive the way she looks. Her use of masks both affirms her own sense of identity and challenges the way others see her as neither black nor white, but ‘something in between.’



Erika DeFreitas uses language to subvert racial categorization. Her series of nine self-portraits enunciate the American anthropologist Zora Neale Hurston’s phrase “I am not tragically colored.”² DeFreitas distorts these words by pressing her mouth against a plexiglass barrier. The resulting gestures symbolize a struggle between language and its embodiment, racial preconceptions and self-determination.



Olivia McGilchrist’s photography and video installation focus on her sense of identity as a white woman born in Jamaica, who has recently discovered that her family has African ancestry. Embedding herself in the Jamaican landscape to evoke the ghosts of this unknown ancestry, McGilchrist questions her complicity in the ongoing inequities of her native country.

Works Pictured: Olivia McGilchrist, *Discovery Bay*, detail, 2013, photograph on banner, 84” x 54” (left) | Jordan Clarke, *Nothing is Just Black or White*, 2008, Oil on Canvas, 30” x 40” (top right) | Jordan Clarke, *Something in Between*, 2011, Oil on Canvas, 30” x 36” (bottom right) | Erika DeFreitas, *I Am Not Tragically Colored* (after Zora Neale Hurston), detail, 2014, photography (back)

¹ Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, 2003, p. 96.

² Zora Neale Hurston, “How It Feels to Be Colored Me,” in *I Love Myself When I Am Laughing...and Then Again When I Am Looking Mean and Impressive: A Zora Neale Hurston Reader*, ed. Alice Walker, Feminist Press CUNY, 1979, pp. 153-155.